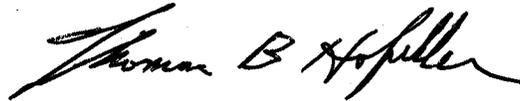


For: State Offices, SED's, STC's, and Administrative Officers (AO's)

2008 Filing of STC's OGE Form 450 and Ethics Orientation Training Requirement

Approved by: Associate Administrator for Operations and Management



1 Overview

A Background

Effective January 1, 2008, STC's were reappointed to their position. According to 3-PM, subparagraph 128 C, STC members must submit their OGE Form 450 within 30 calendar days upon entrance on duty or reappointment. OGE Form 450 reports were due on February 1, however, because of an administrative delay, reports must be submitted to the Office of Ethics, Farm, Conservation, and Rural Programs Branch by **COB May 30, 2008**.

B Purpose

This notice:

- advises all STC members of their obligation to file OGE Form 450 no later than **COB May 30, 2008**
- provides the reporting period will be the **preceding** 16 months (January 1, 2007, through April 30, 2008)

Note: STC members are considered special government employees (SGE's); therefore, their reporting status is "New Entrant".

- advises that OGE Optional Form 450-A will **not** be accepted
- informs STC's that the required ethics orientation training shall be completed.

C Questions

Direct questions about OGE Form 450's and the required ethics orientation training to Tonya Willis, Ethics Specialist at 202-720-0055.

Disposal Date	Distribution
December 1, 2008	State Offices; State Offices relay to SED's, STC's, and AO's

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2 Filing Requirements for OGE Form 450

A STC’s Filing Requirement of OGE Form 450

OGE Form 450 (**January 2007**) should be used in place of all previous versions. The newly revised OGE Form 450 may be obtained through the Internet at either of the following web sites:

- www.usda-ethics.net/, CLICK “Forms”
- www.usoge.gov, CLICK “Forms, Publications & Other Ethics Documents”.

Note: STC’s are SGE’s and, therefore, cannot use the Optional Form OGE 450-A.

B Additional Assistance in Completing OGE Form 450

OGE has created the online course, “Completing the OGE Form 450”, to assist filers with completing OGE Form 450. There are separate courses for both experienced and new filers. A link to the courses may be found at www.usda-ethics.net/, CLICK “Forms”.

This web site also provides a link to information that addresses some of the OGE Form 450 filers’ more common issues, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), and other information about the Federal ethics laws and regulations.

3 SED and AO Responsibilities

A Reviewing and Certifying OGE Form 450’s

SED’s or their designee shall:

- provide STC’s with OGE Form 450
- once STC’s have completed OGE Form 450, perform an intermediate review on each STC member’s OGE Form 450, paying close attention to any activity that may pose a conflict of interest, according to the following.

Step	Reviewing and Processing Instructions for OGE Form 450’s
1	Stamp the date received in the “Date Received by Agency” box located at the top of OGE Form 450.
2	Review for completeness and accuracy.
3	Check to determine if any financial institution-related activities, ownership of bank stock, or bank ownership or any other involvement with a commercial lender, or board of directors in “Part I: Assets and Income” or “Part III: Outside Positions” does any business with FSA. If so, the reviewer must notate the back of OGE Form 450.
4	Initial and date all notations
5	Sign and date the “Signature and Title of Supervisor/Other Intermediate Reviewer” box.

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3 SED and AO Responsibilities (Continued)

B Required Ethics Orientation Training

SED's or their designee shall ensure that all STC's:

- receive their required ethics orientation training
- complete the ethics training certification (Exhibit 1).

This year's ethics orientation training will consist of completing an interactive web-based training module. The course, "**Ethics Training for Special Government Employees**", contains a summary of ethics laws and rules that apply to SGE's and is designed to be completed in about 1 hour. To access the training module, go to <http://www.usoge.gov/>, CLICK "OK", scroll down and CLICK "Computer & Web-Based Training". Under the heading "Training Modules", click on the titled course.

Note: The State Office shall print the training material from the web site to provide to STC members.

C Forwarding OGE Form 450 and Training Certification

AO's shall submit intermediated reviewed OGE Form 450's and completed ethics training certifications (Exhibit 1) to the following address by Express Mail.

USDA, Office of Ethics
Farm, Conservation, and Rural Programs Division
Attn: Tonya Willis, Ethics Specialist
STOP 2120
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
South Building, Room 6832
Washington, DC 20250-2120

STC Members Training Certification

STC Members Training Certification

I completed my training requirements on _____.
(Date)

I certify that I completed the assigned module:

“Ethics Training for Special Government Employees”

and understand the rules and regulations therein.

I agree to follow the rules and principles explained in the training module. I further comprehend that failure to comply with these rules and regulations may lead to disciplinary action or removal from the Federal Service.

(Signature) (Date)

Please Print:

Name	Daytime Phone
Title/Grade	Organization/Office
E-Mail Address	